

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6064

INFO AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

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SUBJ: SYAHRIR TRIAL--JUDICIAL INTERROGATION

REF: JAKARTA 15026

BEGIN SUMMARY: SIX DAYS OF INTERROGATION BY JUDGES HAS ELICITED DENIALS BY SYAHRIR OF MORE INFLAMMATORY ACTIONS CITED IN PROSECUTION CHARGES, COUPLED WITH ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND LENGTHLY EXPLICATION OF HIS VIEWS ON NEED FOR CHANGES IN GOI APPROACH TO ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT. SYAHRIR'S DENIALS LACK CREDIBILITY IN CERTAIN CASES, BUT HIS FIRM DEFENSE OF ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL VIEWS UNDERLINES FUNDAMENTAL DIFFICULTY GOI FACES IN PURSUING INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND OF JANUARY 15 EVENTS. NOT ONLY DE TRIALS PROVIDE IDEAL FORUM FOR AIRING OF CRITICISMS OF GOI ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL POLICIES, BUT TRIALS MAKE GOI ACYEAR TO BE PROSECUTING DEFENDANTS BECUASE THEY EXPRESSED DISSENTING VIEWS OF THESE QUESTION . FIRST WITNESS SCHEDULED TO APPEAR JANUARY 13. FOLLOWING BASED ON PRESS REPORTS. END SUMMARY

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1. JUDICIAL INTERROGATION OF UNIVERSITY INDONESIA (UI)

STUDENT DISCUSSION GROUP SECRETARY SYAHRIR, DEFENDENT IN SECOND JANUARY 15 SUBVERSION TRIAL, COMMENCED DECEMBER 30 FOLLOWING REJECTION BY JUDGE OF DEFENSE MOTION TO DISMISS CHARGES. (AS IN SIREGAR TRIAL, DEFENSE HAD ARGUED 1963 ANTI-SUBVERSION DECREE ON WHICH CHARGES BASED NO LONGER VALID; DEFENSE HAS STRESSED THAT SIMILAR OBJECTION WOULD BE LODGED AT EVERY TRIAL BASED ON THAT DECREE). SYSTEMATIC QUESTIONING, PRIMARILY BY PRESIDING JUDGE ABDULRACHMAN, COVERED ALL MAJOR POINTS OF INDICTMENT IN ORDER AND COVERED SIX DAY OF SESSION, CONCLUDING JANUARY 9. FIRST WITNESSES SCHEDULED TO BE CALLED JANUARY 13.

2. SYAHRIR DENIED MOST OF MORE INFLAMMATORY ACTIONS OF WHICH HE ACCUSED, INCLUDING ALLEGED STATEMENTS ATTACKING GOVERNMENT LEADERS AND ROLE OF MILITARY, CALLS FOR STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS FOLLOWING THAI MODEL, ETC. SYAHRIR ARGUED INDICTMENT MISQUOTED OR MISINTERPRETED MANY OF HIS REMARKS. AND IN SOME CASES ATTRIBUTED STATEMENTS TO HIM WHICH ACTUALLY RAISED BY OTHER SPEAKERS OR QUESTIONERS AT VARIOUS STUDENT GATHERINGS. SYAHRIR ALSO CLAIMED IGNORANCE ON SOME POINTS (INCLUDING ORDER POSTPONING AUG 1973 SEMINAR OF WHICH HE WAS ORGANIZER--COPY OF WHICH ORDER WAS AMONG DOCUMENTS CONFISCATED FROM HIS HOME--AND REFERENCE TO SOCIAL RESTLESSNESS IN INVITATION TO ANOTHER DISCUSSION IN WHICH HE PARTICIPATED).

3. SYAHRIR ACKNOWLEDGED (SOMETIMES IN QUALIFIED FORM) OTHER POINTS IN STATEMENT OF CHARGES. THESE INCLUDED HIS STATEMENTS THAT GOI DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY NEEDS REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT DUE TO INSUFFICIENT ATTENTION TO NEED FOR EXPANSION OF JOB OPPORTUNITIES AND TO PROBLEM OF WIDENING GAP BETWEEN RICH AND POOR, AND SUGGESTIONS MADE TO STUDENTS IN YOGYAKARTA AND UI DENISTRY FACULTY THAT THEY ACTIVATE STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND CARRY OUT ANNOUNCED ACTION PROGRAMS. HE ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED MAKING STATEMENT IN PANEL DISCUSSION AT UI JANUARY 8 CALLING FOR "NEW POLITICAL COLOR" IN INDONESIA. IN LENGTHLY EXPLANATION, #3 DESCRIBED EXISTING "JAVANESE POLITICAL CULTURE" AS TOO SUBSERVIENT TO HIGHER AUTHORITY AND EXISTING POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS (INCLUDING PARLIAMENT AND PARTIES) AS NOT YET FUNCTIONING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AS THEY SHOULD BECAUSE NOT FELT BY THE PEOPLE TO BE EFFECTIVE, AND STATED HIS VIEW THAT STUDENTS MUST PLAY ACTIVE POLITICAL ROLE IN CHANGING THIS POLITICAL "COLOR" BY ACTING AS PRESSURE GROUP VIS-A-VIS GOVERNMENT IN FASHION OF KAMI (1965-66 PERIOD ANTI COMMUNIST STUDENT ACTION FRONT).

4. COMMENT: SYAHRIR'S SOMEWHAT LAME PROFESSION

OF IGNORANCE CONCERNING ORDER POSTPONING AUGUST 1973
SEMINAR AND RELATIONSHIP OF HIS ACTIONS TO GENERAL FERMENT
OF 1973/74 PERIOD PRESUMABLY WILL NOT IMPRESS JUDGES.
HIS EXPLANATION THAT STATEMENTS CONCERNING STUDENT
POLITICAL ROLE AND ACTIVATION OF STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS
NOT INTENDED TO INCITE STUDENTS TO ACT AGAINST CURRENT
GOVERNMENT ALSO UNLIKELY TO BE CONVINCING. NEVERTHELESS,
SYAHRIR'S VIEWS ON APPROPRIATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
POLICIES AND INCREASED POLITICAL PARTICIPATION ARE WIDELY
SHARED AMONG EDUCATED PUBLIC (AND EVEN WITHIN GOI), AND
LENGTHLY EXPLORATION AND EXPLICATION OF THESE VIEWS IN
TRIAL UNDERLINES GENERAL PROBLEM FOR GOI IN TRIALS OF
"INTELLECTUALS" IN CONNECTION WITH JANUARY 15 EVENTS. NOT
ONLY WILL TRIALS ALLOW EXTENSIVE AIRING OF CRITICISM OF
GOI ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL POLICIES, BUT OVERALL IMPRESSION
CREATED BY TRIALS WILL BE THAT GOI IS PROSECUTING DEFEND-
ANTS BASICALLY FOR EXPRESSION OF DIFFERING VIEWS ON THESE
IMPORTANT PUBLIC QUESTIONS. GOI WILL BE NET LOSER ON BOTH
COUNTS. NEWSOM

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